

C.C. 17-
*The Excellencies of the GOOD MAN,
beyond the strictly Just, Honest Man.*

A
SERMON

Preach'd at the
Cathedral Church
OF

LINCOLN,

On the 8th of *March*, 172 $\frac{3}{4}$.

AT THE
ASSIZES.

By ELISHA SMITH, M. A. Rector
of *Tid St. Giles*, in the *Isle of ELY*.

LONDON:

Printed for W. TAYLOR, at the Ship in
Pater-Noster-Row: Sold by J. ROBERTS,
in *Warwick-Lane*. M DCC XXIV.

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TO

Sigismund Trafford, Esq;

HIGH SHERIFF

FOR THE

County of *LINCOLN*;

THIS

S E R M O N

Printed at His REQUEST,

Is Humbly Inscribed

By his most Obedient,

Humble Servant,

E. S.

TO

William Trafford, Esq.

HIGH SHERIFF

FOR THE

County of LINCOLN.

THIS

S E R M O N

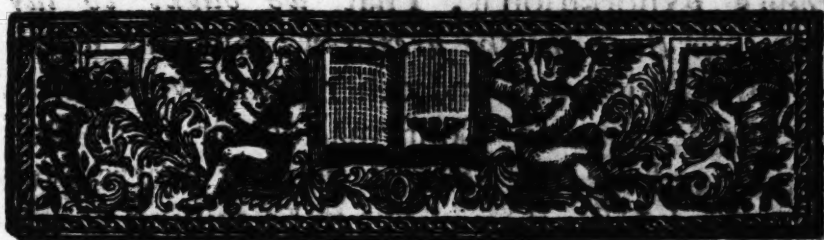
Preached at the Request

of the Hon. the

Right Hon. the

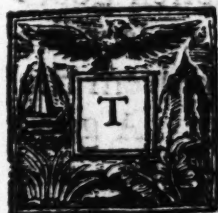
Hon. the

E. S.



ROM. V. 7.

*Scarcely for a righteous man will one die ;
yet peradventure for a good man some
would even dare to die.*



THE Righteous being here put in Contradistinction to the Good Man, requires a Limitation, and bespeaks an Idea of a Character distinct from that of the Good Man. By whom, in this Place, is intended a beneficent, charitable, obliging Person : The Original *ἀγαθός**, with several of its Compounds†, carries this Meaning in several other Places of Scripture.

But who so prodigal of Life, as peradventure to offer it up for the very best, most consum-

* Matth. xx. 15. Rom. xii. 21.

† Mark iii. 4. 1 Tim. vi. 18.

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mate Person that ever lived? We read indeed St. *John's* Exhortation ||, That *we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*: But this seems to respect his own, and other primitive Confessors Fate; that in Confirmation of their Doctrine, and for the Sake of gaining others over to Eternal Life, they ought to be willing to lay down their Temporary one; glad of Martyrdom in so good a Cause. We read also of *Moses*, * *praying to be blotted out of the book of the living, i. e.* that he might even share in the Destruction; weary of his Life, and Authority over the Children of *Israel*, if it would not please the Almighty to forgive them that rash consuming Sin, of making the first golden Calf: But this was a seasonable devoting his Life, and all his Interest in God, to the Publick good. It was also very generous in *Jonas*, to sacrifice his Life, to appease the Storm, and redeem the Lives of those he was imbarckt with: A good Type of our Saviour's Love in dying, and rising again for us! And the Sacrifice *Sampson* totally made of his, was from the same Motive. St. *Clement* in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*, assures us of many of his Cotemporaries, who delivered themselves into Bonds of Slavery, that they might restore others to their Liberty; many who hired out themselves Servants unto others, that by their Wages they might

|| 1 John iii. 16.

* Exodus xxxii. 32.

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feed and sustain them that wanted. Our Apostle also, ix. 3. of this *Epistle*, could have wish'd himself *accursed* from Christ for his Brethren, the *Jews* sake; if such a Wish, and such a Figure of his Love could compass their Conversion. And of the *Galatian* Converts he bears witness † that they would by way of Service have *pluck'd out their eyes* and given him, had he required it.

Still, where is he to be met with, who will venture so far, as part with his Life for the dearest Friend, or kindest Benefactor that ever was heard of? A famous Pair of Friends are said to have personated, and strove to undergo Death for each other: But all the Truth of that may be no more than poetical Imagery. Friendship, notwithstanding it is so very dear and engaging, supposes, and is founded upon Life: And if the Rule directs loving another *as* ourselves, he only transgresses it, who offers up his Life, for that is loving better. It was the friendly *Mæneas's* Observation||, That we are to serve a Friend in every thing consistent with Friendship, but Death is incompatible, is itself the Death of all terrene Friendships.

With what Interpretation then receive we the present Scripture? — Suppose, if you please, some one really sacrificing his Life and all for

† Gal. iv. 15.

|| Omnia pro amico, dummodo vivamus, mors ultima linea rerum.

a good Man: The Question instantly recurs, whether he would not best deserve that Title himself? Or, what good Man would suffer any other to undergo it, without a like, which in this Case, is an impossible Return: Is Excess commendable in nothing so much, as in the Case of Gratitude? Or Ingratitude, is that so detestable, that we ought to do, suffer any thing, Death itself, rather than incur it? Some Return without doubt we ought to make; nay, if in our Power, a compleat Requital: But this is more than a Requital.

While we are thus musing on the Words, does not this apposite Meaning plainly present itself to our Edification? That the diffusively good, the generously kind, the charitable, beneficent Man, is the most valuable Person in the World, far beyond the much esteem'd honest, just Man. And if any thing besides the Christian Faith, and the Publick Good, deserves to excite, or is able to justify the Oblation of my Life, it would be the Rescue and Preservation, of that endeared Person; beneficent in general to all, to me in particular most obliging: It would be heroick to safe-guard the precious Life of that usefulest Benefactor to Mankind, at the Hazard of my own. *Seneca* has a noble Resolution: “* I will help a dying Man, if I can, but I will not die my self for him; un-

* Succurram perituro, sed ut ipse non peream, nisi si futurus ero magni Hominis, aut magnæ rei, merces.

“less by my Death; I can save a great
“Person, or become the Price of a great
“Thing”.

Should we take the Advice of some, who would read the Words with an Interrogation; they will have the same adequate Intendment, and mightily besides enhance the Apostle's Argument, proceeding manifestly here in a Climax and Gradation. Take then the Interrogation, and read with a Question: They admirably magnify the superlative Kindness and Love of our Saviour, as coming into this sinful World, as a Lamb among Wolves, to die for Men, who were neither Righteous; nor Good. For who will die for a Righteous Man? Nay, who find in his Heart to do so much for a Good Man? Yet *Jesus Christ* actually died the Death of Pain, and Shame, for us, who were neither: So it follows in the next Verse, *But God commended his love to us* (a prodigious Commendation it is!) *in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Either way, we have, you see, in this Passage a distinguishing Preference designedly given to Charity above Justice: It being a common thing with the Spirit of God and Goodness in other Holy Scriptures to single out this Virtue, and set this Christian Excellence foremost of all the rest, for the Imitation of Christians. But no where, I think, is the Esteem and Affection we ought to bear

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it, so remarkably endeared to a living Man, as in this instant Scripture.

And I hope you are of Opinion, that it affords a fair Occasion, of

- I. Endeavouring to represent the Character of the Righteous, and of the Good Man, singly and apart.
- II. Of drawing the Comparison between Them, that we may better perceive how much the *Good* Man deserves the Preference.
- III. Of considering what Duty and Gratitude is due to this Good Man, couched under the Expression of daring to die for him.

First, My first Endeavour is to represent, &c. as to the Righteous Man; my Text does not oblige me to speak of him in the whole Latitude of the Word: But restrains me to consider him only in the Duties and Offices that relate to his Neighbour, Mankind — He is one then, who exactly practises common Justice and moral Honesty; just and true in all his Dealings; hurts no body's Person, Name, or Circumstances by Word, or Deed; pays all their just Dues claimable by any Law, or Custom, of the Country, or Place where he sojourns: Whatever things are honest, are true, are just, he transacts

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transacts fairly and impartially, whether towards Superiors, Equals, or Inferiors. Tribute to whom Tribute; Custom to whom Custom; Fear to whom Fear; Honour to whom Honour. He scorns to defraud or over-reach the Simplest, though he could do it safe of all Discovery; being Honest out of Conscience, not merely for a Name. Were there no municipal Laws, he would be full as just as he is; governing himself by that universal Reason and Equity, which is the moral Virtue of all written Laws. Are there any Flaws in making, or Quirks in executing such Laws? He would still take no Advantage thereof. He maketh not fluctuating Opinion to be the Rate of eternal Good and Evil. Nor the Combinations of the self-designing, or the zeal-deceiving, or deceived (so often contradictory to one another) to be the absolute Measure, and true Scale of *Honesty*, but rather its *Misnomer*, and a designing Partiality among Men. Where, and when, he is obliged to speak, he speaks the plain, unquivocating Truth, rather than flatter any, or occasion one to be deceived; not ashamed of God's Testimonies even before Kings. With the Psalmist, * *he worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth from his heart, pun-*

* Psalm xv.

ctually keeps his word and promise, though to his own hurt he changes not. So very praise-worthy is he in common Esteem, that we seem to comprize all Worth, when we call a Person *a right honest man.*

For indeed, this is a Virtue previously fundamental of all the social Virtues, and ever will be the most indispensable in Society. It is plain, Charity and all obliging Goodness can have no other Basis, as a Virtue among Men, distinguish'd in their Properties; seeing nothing can be charitable to any one, but what is first just to all. When Mankind form'd themselves into Societies, and separate Properties, where could there have been found any Enjoyment of any Right or Property, without a mutual Confidence of not invading or disturbing one the other? When first that encroaching, unsociable Self-Interest induced some to be false, others unjust, then arose written Laws (and out of them *Judges, and Juries,*) as Barriers and Boundaries, to secure every one their own, and punish the violent, or crafty Intruder into other Peoples. So that from the Abundance of devised Methods of neglecting this Virtue, sprang all the voluminous Laws throughout the World, which, one way or other, concern little else but *meum and tuum.*

With

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With what abiding firmness subsist all Leagues, and Alliances, Intercourse, and Commerce between Nation and Nation, when they subsist on this Virtue?

Yet this necessary Virtue must give Place to Charity, as we shall see by and by.

There is an *odd* Notion of Honesty suck'd in, as I may say, among a Sort of Men, which I don't know whether I had best intimate, or not; unless the bare hinting may be sufficient to expose the Injustice of clipping and abusing so grave and solemn a Word. I mean the Appellation of the *Honest Fellow*; one that minds his Bottle, and troubles himself little with other things. Is it, because he pays his Reckonings generously, constantly keeps Appointments, exactly gives and takes the same Measure in the Glass, calling it with great Satisfaction, the doing you *Justice*; whilst he would have you, like himself, nicely just at those Oblations to all the circling Healths, though to the impairing of his own? Thus by a constant Course of jovial Honesty, it is too commonly true, that he is robbing his Family of Sustenance, himself of Innocence, and the Publick of his Service.

To the avoiding this, with some Folks reputable, though certainly unjust, and actually indictable Honesty, it is enough to have
named

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named to rational Hearers ——— From him,
no desirable Sight, let us turn our Eyes,

Secondly, To the Good, the Kind, and Beneficent Man. Him we have the inspired Writings describing in charming Representations: With the Psalmist, (xxxvii. 26.) he is very merciful, and his seed is blessed; he sheweth favour, and guides his affairs, of that nature, with discretion; takes not up a reproach against his neighbour, nor willingly slanders him. His lovely Dispositions are set forth by St. Paul, in the most engaging Characteristicks; as suffering long and is kind; envying not; vaunting not itself; not being puff'd up; not behaving itself unseemly; seeking not her own; not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; bearing all things; believing all things; hoping all things; enduring all things † ——— And is, in short, all things excellent and lovely in the Eyes of Men. Can he be otherwise? Who looks upon it to be his Duty, to lay out his Thoughts, his Time, his Means in doing all the good he can, to all. He therefore receives good Offices from others, as Favours; does them himself, as Debts; making the least of what he gives,

† 1. Cor. xiii.

and

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and the most of what he receives. He will ask nothing of another that is inconvenient for him to grant; but you oblige him most, good Man, by asking, *i. e.* giving him an Opportunity of discharging his pleasant Duty: He would even be glad to prevent your Request, if he could know your Want. They who need, and they who receive his ready Benefits seem to him not much inferior to Benefactors. He lends to some sort of Industry hoping for nothing again; and gives to other some, desiring no Return, but to be inform'd how he may do you further Services. If he moderately labours after an addition of worldly Goods, it is as much for others sake as his own; for the Advantage principally of extending his Beneficence farther, of being more hospitable to Strangers; more liberal to the Poor; and more assisting to his Friends. Whatever therefore are his Possessions, he of all Men may be said to *enjoy* them, and enjoy them too without Envy, seeing all these in good measure partake with him. When any apply to him for Service, he promises not so much as he performs, being short in nothing but doing less than he threatens; and performs with so frank and condescending an Air (if to an inferior) as if he valued the Person, as much as the Duty. If he receives from, and becomes obliged to Superiors, it is

is ever upon Principles of Honour, and the after-merit of maintaining a perpetual Gratitude. Whatever he himself gives or grants, he does it freely, and soon, and chearfully; not clogging the Benefit with hard Conditions, nor abating it with long Expectations, or seeming Unwillingness, or Repentance afterwards. When he can't serve you himself, he presently engages some Friend or Acquaintance to accomplish your Desire; if no way in his Power to grant your Request, he then answers with such Concern and Courtesy, that you find yourself even obliged with the manner of his Denial.

And what crowns all with double Lustre, he says and does these things without the least Affectation, in studied Concealment and Obscurity; not letting his Right Hand know what his Left is doing; not his next door rich Neighbour on the one Hand, if on the other lives an indigent Family that subsists on private Charity; often relieving Wants, and the Shame of begging, at the same time, by Supplies from an unknown Hand. Within himself whilst he enjoys the Conscience of these good Deeds, (which gives Sublimity to his Mind, and to his Bosom the greatest rejoicing,) he shuns Applause from Men (for that is very often least acceptable where

it is most deserved) but by industriously shunning, merits it the more. Divine Humility! Great celestial Use of Reason, where-ever seen! Which Men may justly admire, can never sufficiently commend; but Heaven will amply reward hereafter.

While he is here on Earth, let us converse a little in the Company of this engaging Man, that you may be further delighted, and inspired to Imitation, with observing how the Benevolence of his good Nature shews it self; in saying, and doing whatever he judges will entertain, by advantaging you most: For as St. Paul requires, ** he does not please himself, but his neighbour to edification.* Upon serious Subjects, which he is not unmindful to introduce, he seasons his Discourse with Grace, and applies the Methods of conciliating Favour and Acceptance. Upon indifferent ones (for he complies with all innocent Humours and Fashions) displays Cheerfulness and Easiness rather than any upbraiding Superiority of Knowledge: More intent upon hearing others, than to the Opportunity of speaking himself. To give every one the acceptable Opportunity of shewing them-

* Rom. xv. 1, 2.

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selves, is to him a delicate Satisfaction ;
 for the same Apostle teaches him † *not to
 look on his own things, but on the things
 also of others.* He never disputes with a
 mere Design to contradict, but sometimes
 to mistrust himself; always for Truth, never
 for Victory: Therefore manages without
 Heat or Passion; ingenuously retracts an
 Error, and owns himself convinc'd. The
 softest Words with the soundest Arguments
 he knows of, are his Method with those who
 dissent from him in Civil or Religious Opi-
 nions. Seldom uses Raillery, knowing when
 sharp, it is as hard to be born by some, as
 any open Injury. He never observes upon,
 nor derides the natural Blemishes of any;
 his Pity and Regards being solely to their
 moral voluntary ones, the only Deformi-
 ties that are shameful. He envies none
 preferr'd before him in a Competition;
 and scorns every ungenerous Method to sup-
 plant his Rival, though provok'd to it.
 He speaks the true Ill of no Man that de-
 serves it, unless the greater Good of others
 necessitates it. In matters of Ceremony he
 gives Place to all, who will take it; in Ho-
 nour, preferring others, and esteeming them

* Phil. ii. 4.

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better than himself, as in Duty bound. When he gives Advice, as to the Young and Ignorant, he delights in Opportunities, but rarely to others, where he has not the Impression of Authority to add to it; but when ask'd, he does it in the best Season and Manner, and without Self-Interest; mutually asks it himself, and receives it thankfully: hears of his own Faults with all the Calmness of Patience, but impatiently amends them. The Faults or Misfortunes of all he knows, or hears of, affect him with Concern, and their Prosperity with rejoycing: Whoever has good Fortune, he makes it his own by Sympathy. And those that are in Prison, Sorrow, Need, Sicknes, or any other Adversity in Mind, Body, or Estate, he by himself or others, visits with his Aids for bettering their Condition.

In Friendship he is most affectionately faithful without too many Professions of his being so: He goes to feast with his Friend (where every thing is a Feast) but makes much more haste to his Misfortunes; his Feet by the Direction of the *Psalmist*, being swifter to do, than receive good.

In his Family you see him indulgent to, and not the less provident for the principal, and every other Interest of his lo-

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ving Kindred; treating his Servants, as knowing he himself has equally a Master also in Heaven; and they reciprocally obey him chearfully, hardly desiring greater Liberty, and as faithful to his Interests, as their own. His Mercy and Tenderness extends even to brute Beasts, and they fare the better for it.

Consider him lastly serving his Country, and you will be pleas'd in seeing how much he forgoes his own Ease and Quiet whenever or wherever call'd to its Service. A steady incorruptible Zeal for that so much inspire his Conduct, that no Hazard, no Burthen, no Expence is declined for its sake. If employed in the higher Spheres of Trust or Profit, he discharges with the greatest Diligence, and Disinterestedness: In every Thing, upon all Emergencies, it is a Matter of Conscience to him, to seek his own Interest only in *Subordination* to that of the Publick; short of which, he knows, he cannot claim the Name of *Honest*; but in fulfilling that Character, the true Measure of Publick-Spiritedness in him, how much does he with the worthy Founders of great Families in all Ages, deserve universal Applause? As long as he continues in such precarious Stations, he therefore loses no Opportunity of doing all the good he can; because

cause he neither courted; nor accepted the Power, for any other End, comparably to that, of indulging himself the glorious, divine Pleasures of promoting the good of others: He is so truly devoted to the Publick Welfare in every Stage and Station of his Life, as to follow the only Principles of that in our present happy Establishment, and be led by no Party, no Person, any further; assisting all he can, but never retrograde to its Prosperity, envying none the Honour of being the Instruments of it.

If he is ordained to any holy Function, he takes care to brighten the Faithfulness of teaching the Truth, as it is in Jesus, and as it belongs to such a Steward of the great Exemplar, with an exemplary Goodness. His exceeding Love to Souls recommends his Master's Precepts the better, and the Charms of his own conformable Conversation gives life and force to his Discourses beyond any Language: If the Opinion of his Probity give weight to his Words, what diffusive Persuasion follows captive from the Knowledge of his diffusive Charity? His Moderation and Mercy, his Peaceableness and Patience, his general Kindness to Mankind, his great Affection to his Country's Good, and his carrying on the
true

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true Intention of the Bible for promoting that, are so far from giving offence in any thing that the Ministry be not blamed; that it occasions it to be esteem'd as a most useful Function: Because he exerts the same upon any Crisis of Danger to the Protestant Religion or *British* Liberties, for recovering his fellow Subjects to an Understanding of their own Happiness, under the Blessing of our present Settlement: Teaching them the ever constant Religion of living in peaceable Submission to Governors, of fearing God, honouring the King, and loving one another.

Thus have we observed the beneficial and engaging Conduct of this emphatical good Man in the Text, in every Station of Life; and observing, must needs love him: And Love will dispose us (if any thing can) to suffer even Death for his sake — And we shall be the more confirmed in this Disposition, especially of undergoing it rather for him, than the strictly Righteous Man, when we have compared them a little together: Which was my Second Endeavour, *viz.*

II. To draw the Comparison between them, that we may the better perceive how much the Good Man deserves

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serve the Preference: The comparing Excellencies is the briefest Way of distinguishing them.

If we take our Rise at the Fountain-Head of these Virtues, and consider them in the Original, whence they derive, I mean the Deity it self; there, Mercy and Goodness have the Preeminence over all the rest. It rejoyceth against Judgment, to the enlarging the Almighty's Distributive, and to the restraining his vindictive Justice; *in the midst of judgment he remembers mercy.* Without this how undesirable would all his other Attributes be? His Wisdom would astonish and confound us, by over-reaching ours; his Power, and Justice affright us, in our Guilt; his Holiness only upbraid and disgust us with our own Vileness and Unworthiness: If infinite Goodness and Compassion did not step in, to sweeten and conciliate them all unto us. By freely proffering Grace and Pardon upon easy Conditions, even the Imitation of that same Goodness and Mercy; that so imitating, *homo homini Deus sit*; that we endeavour to be perfect in that, as he is perfect; that we imitate, as far as our Imperfections will admit, that superabundant Mercy of his, "which is, (as one well expresses it) always ready for those who desire it, al-

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“ ways finds out those that seek it, oft
 “ stands in the way of those who would
 “ avoid it, and overtakes them that fly
 “ from it”. It is this which renders the
 Godhead so amiable, so adorable; this
 which charms us into a Fear of his Dis-
 pleasure, and Obedience to his Laws; this
 which leads, or should lead all Men to
 Repentance, and opens their Mouth wide
 in his Praise. In short, his Goodness ren-
 ders him a God to Mankind, and to us
 consigns that very Name; It is that which
 constitutes him our Father, our Creator,
 our Redeemer, our Preserver, our Rewar-
 der.

Besides, Love and Charity are not only
 the Way and Means, but the remaining
 Habit and Disposition of the Soul for the
 Entertainments of future Bliss. Justice,
 Hope, Faith, and all other Virtues have
 their Use solely here, and leave us at the
 Grave; only Charity goes along with us,
 and continues for ever, as it begins our
 Heaven here. For it is not our mere ho-
 nest Dealings that gives a Title or Assu-
 rance now; seeing we know only that we
 have passed from death to life, by our love
 to the brethren*; nor gives it Possession

* 1 John iii. 14.

hereaf-

hereafter, at the great Audit of Accounts : But feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, doing all the good we can in our Generation. That being the Business Christians are to think themselves placed in Society to accomplish. For that glorious Intent our Saviour himself condescended to come into this World ; and the nearest Representative he has left behind on Earth, is the Person that does most good to the Souls and Bodies of Men. We his Followers are obliged to imitate his Business, of *doing good*, and not take up with the barren Virtue, of doing no harm in the World. That, though the great Branch of Justice, is rather to be innocent than virtuous : But to oblige and benefit all in our Power, is the Glory and Compendium of all Virtues ; the Topick of all Praise ; the summary Lesson of *Moses* and the Prophets, of Christ and the Apostles ; *for he that loveth his neighbour fulfils the whole Law.*

The just Man (if I am not tedious) is described, *rigidi servator honesti*, one that governs himself by a Set of inflexible Rules, without due regard to Circumstances and the Equity of Things : And so becomes in the great Preacher's Sense, *Righteous over-much*, i. e. often injurious, without the Per-

D

sonal

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sonal Chancery of Goodness and Candor, ready to qualify and make allowances.

Wit, and Learning, and Riches, and Power, and high Descent, and Beauty, and Strength, and Valour, destitute of Goodness, become undefirable Things. Forasmuch as not one of them ever secures to the Owners the inward Esteem of others, where there is not some competent degree of Goodness dispensing each of them. But a great deal of this last, even with very little of those Advantages, is able to win the Heart with an Opinion of Worthiness, and with a secret Reverence. So that what is truly Praise-worthy in any of the former, must be constantly borrowed from this. Hence the strictly just Governor, or Magistrate, has indeed our Fear, whilst the good and clement commands our Love, which commands all the Obedience of a Man. The Austerity of the former keeps you at awful Distance: The sweet Courtesy and endearing Affability of the latter, irresistibly makes way into the Opinions and Affections of those who are so happy to address him. For one commands imperiously when he is in Authority; whilst the other, void of the Insolence of Office, rather intreats and beseeches; which gives him but the greater Authority: And
an

an Authority so founded, the more easily rules others with their own Consent, at the same time it loses nothing of its proper Respect and Homage. But the wicked in Place, *i. e.* they who neglect or pervert the publick Ends of their Station, have nothing but our outward Respect for a Season; and that is rather paid to their Post, than their Person. The just Magistrate chastises with Severity, the good executes Punishment with a benevolent Intent, for reclaiming the Offender, if possible, as well as for a Terror to others; Punishment taking place, after gentler Means have been defeated. One believes none Criminal but upon evident Guilt; the other would always spare Criminals, if the publick Safety would permit.

Common Justice and Judicatories redress the Injuries of those who can help themselves by a Course of Law; Goodness the Wants and Wrongs of those that cannot.

The Righteous Man gives every one what is their rightful own; the Charitable outdoes him, he gives more, in giving what is *his* own moreover; and when he has conferr'd one Kindness, does not wait for a Return, still going on to bestow a Second, a Third; nor yet the Ingratitude

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of the Receiver makes him weary of Well-doing. The other barter for Kindness, and puts his Benefits out to Use, thinking one good Turn deserves another; and makes so much haste to return an Obligation, that it looks as if he scorn'd to be beholden.

The Just (because he gives all their Dues) dispraises those freely, who deserve it: The Good Man conceals the ill he knows, and finds some pretty Excuse for the Faults the other divulges.

One expects Praise on the other Hand, as a Tribute to his Merit: The other declines nothing so much, expecting his *Euge* and Applause from other Hands.

The first keeps his Promise punctually: The second is commonly better. So he keeps Secrets as well: But this don't care to hear them.

The austere upright Man is suspicious of his Dependants, upon slight Appearances, and thereby gives them the first determining Reason of being ill in good earnest; whilst the candid Good takes a better way to prevent it, by hoping the best, even what he has little reason to believe. He can forgive the Injuries of an Enemy, therefore easily passes over the Mistakes of a Friend.

This

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This too makes the first Step, and goes more than half way towards a Reconciliation upon any Misunderstanding: That Man stands upon Punctilio's, waiting for Concessions and Acknowledgments of Faults. To one few Faults are remissible; to the other all sorts. If one's Righteousness produces him few Adversaries; the other's Good is the more prevalent Way of overcoming Evil, and converting every single Enemy into a Friend.

In a word; this never enough to be commended Virtue, as it shines bright in the Light of Christianity, has not only a transcending Advantage and Pre-eminence over Justice, and Heathen Ethicks, but over all Evangelical Gifts and Graces. If Justice is human; nothing is more divine than Love. It is comprehensively every thing most excellent and amiable in Man. It perfects his Nature, renders him most like the Deity; and is that which shines brightest there. It hides the Multitude of Sins, and gives Approbation at the last Day; nay, is the very Disposition, and beginning of his future Happiness.

And in this Life, the Good Man's compassionate, diffusive Influences to the Needy and Miserable; his benign, meek, forgiving Temper to the Injurious; never fail to
con-

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conciliate universal good Will, and make him beloved as a general Good, a publick Blessing: as one that lives to the Welfare of his Country, the Glory of God, and the Honour of Christianity. When he appears abroad, behold him respected with the Esteem of all, with the Prayers and best Wishes of every body. Tenders of hearty Service wait his Occasions, and glad are they who have their Gratitude first accepted. When he sickens, Sadness overspreads many Faces, whilst Fervor wings their Prayers for his Recovery. When he dies, the Misfortune is almost generally condoled; and not a few strain their Eloquence upon his Character, and the Publick Loss; wishing nothing more, than that they could record to all Ages, the Excellencies of this *o Manacetus*.

And who doubts (if that could have rescued him) but some would have been found more particularly obliged to him, who would even *dared to have died for him*? Which should bring on the

III. Branch; what Duty and Gratitude is due to this Good Man, couched under the Expression of *daring to die for him*. But I have already exceeded your Patience. That may all be summ'd up, in saying, That
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An ASSIZE-SERMON. 31

it is our truest Duty to *imitate* him closely ;
our best Gratitude, to be *as like* him as we
can.

*May every one here present, go, and do
likewise.*

F I N I S.

E R R A T.

Page 18. line 6. for mistrust, read instruct.

